

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil Web: sd.ng.mil



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 28, 2017

SD National Guard participates in major cyber exercise

Story by Lt. Col. Wayde Minami – Maryland Air National Guard

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah – Nine members of the South Dakota National Guard joined more than 800 other participants at Camp Williams for Exercise Cyber Shield 17, the National Guard's premier cyber defense training exercise, Apr. 23-May 5.

The exercise, which includes members of the National Guard, the Army Reserve, state and federal government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and private industry from 44 states, is designed to assess participants' ability to respond to cyber incidents.

By working closely with interagency partners and the private sector, the National Guard seeks to strengthen network cybersecurity and the capability to support local responses to cyber incidents. Cyber Shield 17 is part of the National Guard's ongoing effort to improve its ability to respond to real-world cyber incidents.

The first phase of the exercise provide participants the opportunity to hone their skills through academic instruction covering everything from the legal aspects of cyber operations to the nature of cyber threats to hands-on technical training. Equally important, the Soldiers and Airmen are learning their roles as part of the larger cyberspace defense community.

During the second phase of Cyber Shield 17, participants form cyber protection teams and face off against trained antagonists, who simulate online adversaries. The teams try to defend their networks and mitigate the effects of attacks in a freewheeling clash of cyberspace acumen.

The National Guard's dual state-federal status makes it uniquely positioned to help civilian agencies and critical nongovernmental entities if an incident occurs. Because of their status as a state military force when not under federal mobilization orders, Guard units are available to respond to state-level emergencies at their governor's discretion.

"As a governor would call up the National Guard for a state disaster, such as a hurricane - it's no different for a cyber event," said Lt. Col. Henry Capello, the exercise commander.

Moreover, the National Guard's long-standing connections with state and local governments and private industry, combined with its familiarity with the cyberspace environment in which these organizations operate, make it an ideal partnership.

"Being a citizen-Soldier, and being able to work in the communities in which I live, is a little bit different," Capello said. "It means a lot more to me, and I'm able to help them because I understand their problems better."



170424-Z-IU367-002: Members of the South Dakota National Guard, along with their counterparts from the Air National Guard, Army National Guard and Army Reserve, receive the introductory brief for Cyber Shield 17 at Camp Williams, Utah, April 24, 2017. Cyber Shield 17 is an Army National Guard defensive cyberspace operations exercise, with participation of approximately 800 members of the Air National Guard, United States Army Reserve, state and federal government agencies, industry partners, and academia. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Bethany Anderson)

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail ng.sd.sdarnng.list.pao@mail.mil